

3RD ANNUAL ART|ETC AUCTION ONLINE NOW

Throughout the month of May, the 2010 Annual Art|Etc Online Auction is accepting bids for a host of treasures.

Get super deals on one night stays at hotels, jewellery, original paintings, sculptures....or pamper yourself with a cut, manicure and pedicure. Whether a gift for yourself or others, its here.

Go to our website and click on the Auction link! www.HepatitisOutreach.com

Notice Anything Different?

It's been a winter of change here at Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia: A new look, new logo, new staff and a new website.

We want to hear from you about our changes. Look to page 4 for details.

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A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD AGREES RESOLUTION ON VIRAL HEPATITIS

In a major breakthrough following extensive lobbying from the World Hepatitis Alliance and patient groups, the 34 member states of the World Health Organization Executive Branch have recommended a resolution on viral hepatitis to the World Health Assembly in May.

Proposed by Brazil and co-sponsored by Indonesia and Colombia, the resolution gives global support to an official World Hepatitis Day to provide a focus for national and international awareness-raising efforts. The agreement of a resolution is a huge success for patient groups who have worked tirelessly to increase awareness and improve the lives of the people living with hepatitis B and C around the world.

Its adoption by the Assembly would:

- Provide a clear statement that viral hepatitis is now a global priority and has to be tackled globally
- Generate considerable funding for WHO activity to coordinate responses to viral hepatitis at a global level
- Represent a clear commitment by governments to strengthen their response to viral hepatitis, which patient groups would then be able to use to encourage changes in policy and practice at a national level



Charles Gore, President of the WHA, made a direct appeal to delegates at the Executive Branch meeting in Geneva, explaining that he was speaking on behalf of hundreds of patient groups and the 500 million people living with hepatitis B and C:

"Today we ask you to demonstrate the collective will required to halt the death toll...Viral hepatitis does not respect national borders; does not discriminate between races; and it does not recognise the potential of a newborn child. The World Hepatitis Alliance is asking for a resolution on viral hepatitis that explicitly recognises the need for action...a resolution that will deliver results. We ask this as the people affected by these diseases, as your constituents, as your citizens. We are one twelfth of the world's population."

As the date of the World Health Assembly approaches, the WHA will be emphasising to all delegates the important role World Hepatitis Day plays in providing a focus for disease control strategies and awareness-raising. Over the past three years, the hepatitis community has greatly increased the profile of World Hepatitis Day and the resolution is an opportunity to take this profile to new levels, encouraging WHO and government engagement in activities around the world.

FIRST PERSON: HEPATITIS C STIGMA AND ME

HEPATITIS C: I was diagnosed with Hepatitis in October of 1974. After the birth of our second child in July, I had severe haemorrhaging and required an emergency blood transfusion. Hepatitis then was not described with letters A, B or C. It was referred to as Infectious Hepatitis (the kind you get from eating contaminated food or water) or Serum Hepatitis (the kind you get from blood).

I did not have symptoms until October. I complained to the GP that I had severe itching; he could clearly see that I was also jaundiced. Other symptoms were dark coloured urine and very tired. I was admitted to the hospital in isolation immediately. Other instructions were to wash hands thoroughly using a nail brush.

STIGMA: My hospital bathroom had not been cleaned for two weeks. I asked the nurse why it wasn't being cleaned and offered to clean it myself if I had cleansers. In the next two days after I complained again, the cleansers were delivered to my room and I did clean the bathroom myself. This should not have been an option for any patient.

Upon going home I was instructed to continue the personal hygiene routine and to use disposable eating utensils. After a year had passed with lots of resting, I was able to get back to a normal life. Rest had repaired the damage and my energy was much better.

After acquiring a new dentist in 1998 I checked yes on the questionnaire confirming I had Hepatitis. The hygienist asked me to find out what letter it was so that we can all protect ourselves. I was mortified when my doctor informed me that I had hepatitis C and that it never goes away.

My daughter Anne is a dog groomer. Last year on May 19, World Hepatitis Day she had groomed a client's dog.

When the client returned for his dog he wrote a cheque for the payment.

"May 19?" he asked.

"Yes" said Anne "World Hepatitis Day."

"How do you know about that?" asked the man seemingly shocked to know she knew about Hepatitis.

"My mother had Hepatitis C." replied Anne. "She has tested negative after treatment."

The client has not returned with his dog nor does his neighbour bring their dog for grooming.

Recently I had an emergency appointment with a gynaecologist. I filled out another questionnaire with many questions about Hepatitis that I checked yes to. The secretary discretely asked me about my answers. I said that I have given honest answers. When I spoke with the doctor he also questioned me on the Hepatitis. He said you are a hard drug user? I said no, and then he asked how I got Hepatitis C. I said from a blood transfusion. He seemed very frustrated and angry, sighing after every answer I gave. Had I not been in so much pain that day, I would have left his office.

On my next appointment with my family doctor, I talked about my experience with the gynaecologist. He read the follow-up letter to me. It began with; this person has Hepatitis C, *apparently* from a blood transfusion. The Hepatitis fact seemed to be more important than the reason why I was there. I did not return for a follow-up appointment.



"We're not alone"

Bette

AND ME: When I look back at 1974, I had a lengthy illness. One that I had never heard of but I got over it and I was well again within a year. When Hepatitis was mentioned I would say that I *had* it years ago, not knowing that it lingers forever.

I do not talk about my Hepatitis C openly and I'm not sure that I ever will. I do inform doctors about my Hepatitis when needed; also my friends know this about me. They are still my friends who accept me as I am. Knowledge is power. Stay informed. Be well. We're not alone.

Bette is a regular contributor to [Community Connections](#).

Bette can be reached at talkingtobette@gmail.com

Mark Your Calendar.....

Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia

Annual General Meeting

Saturday June 12th at 10:00 am

9th Floor Room 929, Centennial Building

Victoria General Hospital 1276 South Park Street, Halifax

IN THE NEWS:

HEPATITIS C COMPENSATION DEADLINE

Applications are being received from Canadians who became infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) through the Canadian blood supply.

After a seemingly endless battle involving the federal and several provincial governments, lawyers, and people who became infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) through the Canadian blood supply, applications are now being received from those who contracted HCV prior to 1986 or after 1990 and between 1986 and 1990.

Details of the compensation plan that has now been approved by the courts, as well as application forms and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ's), may be found on the Web site of the company that has been chosen to administer the program (Crawford Class Action Services) at: www.pre86post90settlement.ca. For those who were infected between 1986 and 1990, please visit the following Web site: www.hepc8690.ca.

June 30, 2010 is the First Claim Deadline for ALIVE Primarily-Infected Persons for the following compensation programs:

- Pre-1986 / Post-1990 Hepatitis C Settlement Agreement
- Hepatitis C (HCV) January 1, 1986-July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement

From the Canadian Hemophilia Society website: www.hemophilia.ca

FROM THE WEB:

WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN HELP HEPATITIS C

Universally exercise is the solution to just about everything. This is especially true when it comes to battling the Hepatitis C virus. While there are several reasons that exercise is beneficial to those with Hepatitis C, its function of encouraging movement in the lymphatic system is often overlooked.

A Brief Overview of the Lymphatic System

The lymphatic system consists of lymph vessels, nodes and organs for circulating lymph fluids. Considered to be one of the most important aspects of our immune system, the lymphatic system carries cellular waste, toxins and pathogens away from the tissues. It can accomplish this seemingly impossible task because of the lymphatic fluid.

Lymph Flow

Lymph fluid depends on skeletal muscle contractions to move through lymph vessels. Thus, physical activity is the best way to transport cellular debris, pathogens, cancerous cells and toxins away for removal. Without adequate movement, the cells are left stewing in their own waste products and starving for nutrients, a situation which could only worsen chronic Hepatitis C infection. This is especially problematic for those who lead a relatively inactive lifestyle, such as those who sit in a vehicle driving all day or are parked in front of a computer screen for a majority of their waking hours. In contrast, vigorous exercise has been reported to increase lymph flow by 15 to 30 times more than inactivity.

Applied to Hepatitis C

For those individuals who must manage Hepatitis C infection, one of the goals is to help the liver process its toxic load in any way possible. Aiding the circulation of lymphatic fluid is one small way to accomplish that goal.

Because the livers of those with Hepatitis C may have some degree of impaired function, this organ may not be as effective in its role of detoxification. Thus, those with liver damage commonly have a backup of cellular waste and toxins in their bloodstream - a situation that can lead to more liver damage, cancer or hepatic encephalopathy.

By keeping active, those with chronic Hepatitis C can help their liver manage the continual onslaught of waste and toxins. Physical movement is necessary for moving unwanted debris along lymph vessels. This is just one reason why exercise helps reduce demand on the liver and helps keep the immune system healthy - a benefit for anyone regardless of his or her Hepatitis C status.

GO GREEN

To receive an email alert and link to each new edition of "Community Connections" please email us at info@hepatitisoutreach.com
Let's all do something for the environment.

Check us out at
www.HepatitisOutreach.com
and on facebook!

ABOUT US

The Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia is a volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to community capacity and development, health promotion, public awareness and implementation of social support networks throughout Nova Scotia for those living with or affected by; and those at-risk of developing Hepatitis.

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Community Connections is a quarterly informative publication of the Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia. We welcome your comments and contributions.

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LET'S HEAR FROM YOU

As you know, the Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia recently turned ten. As we move into our teens we've adopted a new look, new logo, website and staff. Surf the new website—let me know what works or if something is missing. Or, just connect to introduce yourself, I want hear from you—please mail me at director@hepatitisoutreach.com

Colin Green, Executive Director

GOODLUCK ANGUS

As many of you know, our Program Coordinator Angus Campbell left in January to become the Executive Director of the Halifax Sexual Health Centre. We wish him all the best in his new role and thank him for the passion and dedication he brought to his position here.

Hepatitis C are you & having a ménage à trois?

Join us for a free café style discussion and question session exploring new research into the sexual transmission of hepatitis C among HIV positive men. Are you living with HIV or Hepatitis C? Are you providing services to people with HIV or Hepatitis C? Or do you just want to learn more? This event is funded in part by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and is open to the public at no cost. For more information contact the Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia at 902-420-1767

Monday May 17, 2010
Meet | Greet 7:00 pm
Speakers 7:30 pm
Light snacks provided

FRED
Food + Food + Art
2606 Agricola
Halifax Nova Scotia

Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia • Halifax Sexual Health Centre • Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS • Atlantic Interdisciplinary Research Network

DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 31: last day to bid on amazing things in our Annual Online Auction
- June 12: is the Annual General Meeting
- July 16: final date for submissions to the Summer Edition of Community Connections